

Remarks

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action mailed on May 11, 2005. Applicants respectfully traverse all objections, rejections, and assertions made by the Examiner. With this amendment, claim 32 amended. Claims 32-35, 37, and 39-51 remain pending.

Claims 32-35, 46, 50, and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Gray et al. in U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2002/0045916. Amended claim 32 now recites a major opening that is defined near the proximal end of the filtering region. Gray et al., in contrast, only appear to disclose a closed, mesh-like filter basket where the only openings defined are those formed in the mesh itself. All of the openings appear to be equal. Therefore, Gray et al. do not appear to disclose or suggest a major opening near the proximal end of the filtering region. In light of this amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 32 is patentable over Gray et al. Because claims 33-35, 46, 50, and 51 depend from claim 32, they are also allowable based on this amendment and because they add significant elements to distinguish them further from the art.

Claims 32, 33, 37, 39-45, and 47-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Daniel et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,814,064. The filter of Fig. 18b, referred to by the Examiner, includes two layers of filter membrane extending between the major opening and the distal end of the filter region. Based on this difference, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 32 is patentable over Daniel et al. Because claims 33, 37, 39-45, and 47-49 depend from claim 32, they are also allowable

based on this amendment and because they add significant elements to distinguish them further from the art.

Reexamination and reconsideration are requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is also respectfully requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

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By their Attorney,

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